



Redbrook Hayes Community Primary School

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Wednesday 7th February 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: E.Safety Update – Trending Apps

As outlined in our E-Safety policy and as an essential commitment to Safeguarding we write to you today with essential information regarding your child's online safety.

Trending Apps

We have been informed that two currently trending apps have potential risks to your child's online safety; whether an application is "safe" depends entirely upon how it is used and there are a number of very real risks associated with any type of online application. Most notably:

- Inappropriate contact: from people who may wish to abuse, exploit or bully them.
- Inappropriate conduct: because of their own and others' online behaviour, such as the personal information they make public, for example on social networking sites. Unfortunately, children can also become cyberbullies, especially when encouraged by others.
- Inappropriate content: being able to access or being sexually explicit, racist, violent, extremist or other harmful material, either through choice or in error.

Roblox

Information shared with school suggests that Kent Police have issued a warning to parents about the popular children's app 'Roblox' after identifying concerns about naked characters and inappropriate behaviour within the game. According to the report, 'police say students reported receiving messages from strangers on the app as well as seeing naked characters "doing very adult things.'

As a result we recommend deleting the application until its safety can be assured, however if learners continue to play this game we urge you, as parents, to remain vigilant to the potential threats associated with this application.

IMVU

IMVU is a social media application, as such it allows children to converse with online 'friends', encouraging children to create an avatar and speak to strangers. Alongside this, the app also pinpoints your location, which poses a very real risk of inappropriate contact and grooming.

Again, we would strongly advise against children being given access to this application.

In school, we continue to work hard with all our learners to educate them on the etiquette of conversing through social media, what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour online and essentially, what to do if anything online upsets or worries them.



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As a school we strongly advocate that all primary age children should not be allowed access to social media applications such as IMUV, Whats App, Instagram and Facebook to name a few, as the legal limit for all of these applications is 13.

However, should you make the decision to allow your child to use social media of any kind, we ask you to be vigilant in your monitoring of its use. The following precautions are advised to ensure the safety of all our learners:

- Do not allow learners to access before 13 years old;
- Monitor the conversation feeds daily, making children aware that they will need to share these with you.
- Add yourself as 'friends' or to groups so that learners are aware you can access the account in this way.
- Ensure that children use mobile devices in a space where you are present, and actively observe what children are writing.
- Talk to your child about what to do if someone says something they are worried about and how they should conduct themselves online. Our golden rule in school is **'If you wouldn't say it to their face – Don't say it via Social Media!'**

We sincerely thank you for your support in this matter, and should you have any queries, questions or concerns please do come and speak with us.

In other news ...

Computer Games – We have been made aware of learners playing inappropriate games on their games consoles out of school, namely 'Call of Duty' and 'Grand Theft Auto'. As I am sure you know, these games both have a certificate rating of 18 and are therefore highly inappropriate for learners of Primary School age due to violence, strong language and scenes of a sexual nature.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of the importance of limiting the time all learners spend on games consoles outside of schools. There are a number of risks associated with excessive 'screen-time', including its effect on educational achievement. In school we have noted that there are a number of learners who, having spent time on computer games in the morning before school, are not 'ready to learn' when they arrive at 8.50am, which can impact on their learning throughout the day. We therefore ask you to limit the amount of time learners spend on computers and mobile devices before school, and wherever possible limit playing to weekends and after school only.

Many thanks for your continued support in this matter,

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs C Pilkington
Deputy Headteacher

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